

## CLAIMS

1. An aqueous slurry, useful for cleaning affected tooth surfaces by removing therefrom calculus, plaque or stains, adherent thereto, comprising:  
finely-divided charcoal:  
water; and  
alcohol, ammonia or hydrogen peroxide,  
wherein the water and alcohol, ammonia or hydrogen peroxide provide the liquid portion of the aqueous slurry, and the aqueous slurry is formed by mixing the finely-divided charcoal with the liquid portion.
2. The aqueous slurry of claim 1 wherein the ratio of the finely-divided charcoal to the liquid portion ranges from about 1:5 to about 1:1 by weight.
3. The aqueous slurry of claim 1 wherein the liquid portion comprises water and alcohol.
4. The aqueous slurry of claim 3 wherein the alcohol is present in an amount ranging from about 25% to about 70% by volume of the liquid portion.
5. The aqueous slurry of claim 3 wherein the alcohol is provided by mouthwash.
6. The aqueous slurry of claim 5 wherein the mouthwash is Listerine<sup>®</sup>, Scope<sup>®</sup> or Plax<sup>®</sup>.
7. The aqueous slurry of claim 1 wherein the liquid portion comprises water and ammonia.

8. The aqueous slurry of claim 1 wherein the liquid portion comprises water and hydrogen peroxide.

9. The aqueous slurry of claim 1 wherein the finely-divided charcoal is activated charcoal powder.

10. A method for cleaning affected tooth surfaces, associated with an oral cavity, by removing therefrom calculus, plaque or stains adherent thereto, comprising the steps of:

(a) coating the affected tooth surfaces having calculus, plaque or stains adherent thereto, with the aqueous slurry of claim 1;

(b) contacting the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry for an effective period of time;

(c) optionally, repeating steps (a) and (b) until a desired extent of contact of the calculus, plaque or stains with the aqueous slurry is accomplished;

(d) mechanically removing the calculus, plaque or stains thus contacted from the affected tooth surfaces and associated oral cavity;

(e) optionally, repeating steps (a) – (d) until a desired extent of removal of the calculus, plaque or stains from the affected tooth surfaces and oral cavity is accomplished; and

(f) mechanically and/or rinsingly removing any residual portion of the aqueous slurry, or loosened plaque, calculus or stains from the affected tooth surfaces,

wherein the aqueous slurry is formed prior to coating the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry, or during steps (a) and (b).

11. The method of claim 10 wherein step (b) comprises agitative and frictional contact of the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein step (b) is accomplished by using a length of floss, a brush, a pick, a cotton-tipped pick, or a cotton swab.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein the affected tooth surfaces are coated with the aqueous slurry by taking a desired quantity of the aqueous slurry into the oral cavity and swishing the aqueous slurry around the oral cavity so as to coat the tooth surfaces therewith.

14. The method of claim 10 wherein the affected tooth surfaces are coated with the aqueous slurry by transferring a quantity of the aqueous slurry to an applicator means and bringing the applicator means and the affected tooth surfaces into contact so as to transfer the aqueous slurry from the applicator means to the affected tooth surfaces.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the applicator means is a length of floss, a brush, a pick, a cotton-tipped pick, or a cotton swab.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the pick or the cotton-tipped pick comprises wood or bamboo.

17. The method of claim 10 wherein the affected tooth surfaces are coated with the aqueous slurry by first coating the affected tooth surfaces with the liquid portion by taking a quantity of the liquid portion into the oral cavity and swishing the liquid portion about the cavity, or by transferring a quantity of the liquid portion to the affected tooth surfaces using an applicator means, followed by transferring a quantity of finely-divided charcoal to the liquid portion-coated, affected tooth surfaces using an applicator means, and mixing the finely divided charcoal and liquid portion on the affected tooth surfaces.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein step (d) is accomplished by rinsing with a liquid; brushing; scraping or rubbing using a pick, a cotton-tipped pick, a cotton swab, or a length of floss; applying a vacuum, or by a combination thereof.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the brushing comprises, as an initial step, adding to a toothbrush or another suitable brush, a quantity of the liquid portion of the aqueous slurry, the aqueous slurry, another liquid, toothpaste, or finely-divided charcoal.

20. The method of claim 10 wherein the residual portion of the aqueous slurry is removed from the tooth surfaces by rinsing, brushing, or using a combination thereof.

21. A method for indicating the presence of calculus or plaque adherent to tooth surfaces, comprising the steps of:

- (a) coating the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry of claim 1;
- (b) optionally, contacting the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry for a period of time, such that a visible black color is imparted to the tooth surfaces thus coated and contacted;

- (c) optionally, repeating steps (a) and (b) until a sufficient quantity of the finely-divided, black charcoal has commingled with, or adhered to, the calculus or plaque so as to visibly impart thereto a black color having an intensity sufficient to indicate the presence thereof.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein step (b) comprises agitative and frictional contact of the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry

23. A method for selectively indicating the presence of calculus, adherent to tooth surfaces, comprising the steps of:

thoroughly brushing with toothpaste and flossing to selectively remove plaque, followed by conducting the steps of the method of claim 21.

24. A method for indicating the presence of plaque, adherent to tooth surfaces, comprising the step of:

coating the affected tooth surfaces with finely-divided black charcoal or with a mixture of finely-divided black charcoal and water so as to impart a black color to the plaque.

25. A kit adapted for cleaning affected tooth surfaces, associated with an oral cavity, by removing therefrom calculus, plaque or stains adherent thereto, comprising:

a containerized quantity of the aqueous slurry of claim 1, or a containerized quantity of finely-divided charcoal and, separate therefrom, a containerized quantity of the alcohol, ammonia or hydrogen peroxide, or the liquid portion of the aqueous slurry of claim 1;

a mixing device adapted to mix the finely-divided charcoal and the liquid portion to form the aqueous slurry therefrom, and, where the charcoal and liquid portion are provided separately, an empty container adapted to provide a reservoir for measurably combining and mixing the constituents of the liquid portion, as well as the charcoal and the liquid portion so as to form an aqueous slurry having quantities of the constituents of the liquid portion, as well as of the charcoal and the liquid portion, in desired ratios;

a device adapted to apply the aqueous slurry to the affected tooth surfaces;

a device adapted to agitatively and frictionally contact the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry;

a device adapted to mechanically remove the calculus or plaque thus contacted from the affected tooth surfaces; and

optionally, a device and/or rinsing agent adapted to mechanically or rinsingly remove residual portions of the aqueous slurry, as well as loose plaque or calculus from the affected tooth surfaces.

26. The kit of claim 25 wherein the applicator, adapted to coat the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry, or the device, adapted to agitatively and frictionally contact the affected tooth surfaces with the aqueous slurry, comprises a surface that is impregnated with finely-divided charcoal.